

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: Activating the Role of Sustainability to Transition the Historic District of Riyadh Towards Development

STUDENT: Saeed Hamzah Bahaydar

DEGREE: Masters of Urban and Regional Planning

COLLEGE: Architecture and Planning

DATE: July, 2013

PAGES: 74

The Arab region is one of the most vulnerable to climate change owing to its status as the most water insecure region. In response to drivers of energy security and climate change, Saudi Arabia is able to enact new policies and actions plans to introduce clean energy and green technologies in the redevelopment of existing cities and historic centers. Conservation of existing settlements is one sustainable strategy to mitigate the increase in development and its related ecological footprint. This thesis will examine how sustainable strategies such as creating green spaces, zoned transportation, pedestrian paths and new parking designs can act as transitional motivation for historic areas to adopt more sustainable oriented principles. The case of Al-Dirah district in the historic center of Riyadh is currently undergoing transformation towards intensive high density development. This thesis undertakes a study of existing sustainable projects in the area, and the current spatial conditions to inspire a transitional development proposal for the Al Dirah district. Recommendations for future action is presented.